

# FOOD *Review*

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A bulletin on Food  
Safety and Sanitation  
from Public Health  
District 4

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## WHAT IS THIS GREEN BOX???

Ask some of the food service managers in Central District Health Department's jurisdiction! They have been participants in a food cooling study using these green boxes to record temperatures.

Central District Health Department was awarded a grant to study temperatures of cooling food using a temperature recording device placed in the food. Does your establishment cook then cool a food prior to serving it?

Early results have found that even establishments with "good" food safety inspection records have been fortunate not to have caused major food illness outbreaks. Results have shown that cooling procedures

do not cool food fast enough to meet the UNICODE requirements. Do you know if the food you cool is below 70°F within two hours and then below 45°F in the next four hours???

If you have no documented record of your cooling process, you should start one now. A lined piece of paper can be used to record date, time and temperature. A sample chart is enclosed.

Based on staff availability, CDHD is willing to help you measure temperatures with a data logging device and review any managerial control plans for cooling food safely. Call your health inspector if you are interested in using the temperature logging device.

### Thermometer Calibration.

According to one food consultant, the metal-stem dial thermometer is dangerous and a food safety hazard! The main concern is it is out of calibration too easily. It also measures a zone of temperature from the tip to the "dimple". Your food could be in the danger zone at the dimple but not at the tip. I believe that the better thermometer is a thermo-couple that can measure a pin point area at the tip.



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Until you get a thermocouple you should calibrate using an insulated cup filled first with crushed ice, then water. Immerse the stem past the dimple. Wait 5 minutes and read the temperature. It should be 33-34°F. If it is not, grip the nut located under the dial housing using a wrench or pliers. Then turn the dial housing until the proper reading is under the pointer.

**SAFE FOOD PRODUCT COOKING & HOLDING TEMPERATURES / CRITICAL LIMITS**

**COLD HOLDING** - All foods should be held 41° F or below. \*

**Corrective Action:** If food is out of temperature for less than 4 hours, rapidly cool to 41° F or less within the remaining time period or discard.

<b>COOKING</b>	Poultry products:	165° F / 15 seconds
	Ground Beef:	155° F / 15 seconds
	Eggs, fish, pork, beef	145° F / 15 seconds
	Rare roast beef:	130° F / 121 seconds
	All other foods:	145° F / 15 seconds
	<b>Corrective Action:</b>	<b>Continue cooking</b>

**REHEATING** - Reheat foods to 165° F within 2 hours.

**Corrective Action:** Discard if not reheated within 2 hours

**RECEIVING:**

All PHFs must be at 41° F or less.

**Corrective Action:**

Reject food if not at proper temperature.

**REHEATING** - Reheat foods to 165° F within 2 hours.

**Corrective Action:** Discard if not reheated within 2 hours

**HOT HOLDING** - All foods should be held 140° F or above.

**Corrective Action:** If food is out of temperature for less than 4 hours, rapidly reheat to 165° F or greater within the remaining time period or discard.

**COOLING** - Cool cooked foods from 140° F to 70° F within 2 hours. Then continue to cool from 70°F to 41° F within 4 hours. Food products made from ingredients at room temperature must be cooled to 41° F within 4 hours.

**Corrective Action:** Reheat to 165°F and cool properly, serve, or discard.

\* 41° F is FDA code recommendation.

**EMPLOYEE HEALTH.**

Is your employee contaminating food? Certainly, if you saw an employee deliberately contaminating food you would destroy the food, fire the employee, and report the incident to law enforcement or health authority. Wouldn't you?

While Homeland security is to prevent future terror attacks, we in the food industry must also focus on existing, known threats to the food we serve. Food brought into our kitchen harbor bacteria that can cause illness if not properly removed by washing or killed by cooking. You and your employees can also bring in bacteria, parasites, and viruses that can be passed into the food and cause illnesses.

*Food Review is sent quarterly, free of charge to all licensed food establishments in our health district. We hope to include news of interest and importance. Topic ideas or articles written by the readers are welcome to be sent to: Editor, Food Review, CDHD, 707 N. Armstrong Pl., Boise, ID 83704. Extra copies of the newsletter are available at your local Health Department office.*

This issue of employee health is important enough to have its own section (Section 400) in the Rules Governing Food Safety and Sanitation Standards for Food Establishments (UNICODE), July 1, 1998.

Do your employees know they have a responsibility to report to their employer or person in charge any diagnosis or even a suspicion they may have an illness listed in Section 400? This includes diarrhea and vomiting!

Does your food establishment have a written employee health or sick policy?

Examples of a job application form and an agreement that the employee will report an illness to the Person in Charge can be found at FDA's Food Code 2001 Appendix 7 website:

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fc01-a7.html>

We encourage all operators, as required by UNICODE Section 400, to teach employees their responsibility for health reporting. And operators should not forget their own responsibility to report to the health department any of the listed health conditions.

## Fingernails and handwashing.

Fingernail cleaning is an important part of handwashing. A recent study using E. coli on hands found that the biggest difference in washing the bacteria from hands was not the type of handwashing soap used, but whether a brush was used to clean under the fingernails. Short fingernails are preferable to long nails or artificial ones.

**NOTICE**

**PLEASE WASH  
YOUR HANDS**

## FOOD SECURITY

By the way, do you know what company just delivered your produce? Do you know the delivery person? Such awareness is important in today's security environment. Some believe that a food tampering would occur with a food that would be eaten by many people and perhaps not show any illness symptoms for several days. This would allow more people to be exposed.

**Food managers can protect their business by following basic safe food handling practices.**

- Inspect all foods upon receipt or purchase.
- Wash all raw food products such as fruits and vegetables before eating them to help eliminate bacteria that may be on the food.
- Wash hands, cutting boards, knives and utensils in hot, soapy water before and after handling each raw food item and before touching another food or a surface that will come into contact with food. This will prevent bacteria from spreading and contaminating other food.
- Separate raw foods such as meat, poultry and seafood from foods that are ready-to-eat.
- Cook foods thoroughly to kill harmful bacteria that may be present.
- Use your thermometer frequently to be certain that cook temperatures and holding temperatures of food are safe and effective for killing bacteria or preventing growth of bacteria.
- Refrigerate foods promptly. Cold temperatures keep most harmful bacteria from growing and multiplying.



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**Food Security - FDA's Guidance Documents** at [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fsterr.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fsterr.html)  
Food Safety and Terrorism, Food and Cosmetic Security Guidance, Draft  
...Retail Food Stores and Food Service Establishments: Food Security Preventive Measures,  
Or request a copy from your Public Health Specialist

## REMINDER:

**Training Class Schedules** are on the CDHD website: [www.cdhd.org](http://www.cdhd.org), then in the left margin click on [classes@cdhd](mailto:classes@cdhd). We can also provide training at your facility, but do charge \$60/hour.

check out our website:

[www.cdhd.org](http://www.cdhd.org)

